

In the April number of the JOURNAL appeared a very moderate review of the "Viavi treatment" and its promoters, with quotations from the literature which the Messrs. Law, the gentlemen who own and promote the "Viavi treatment," put out. The quotations, we thought, were sufficiently illuminating and to us seemed amply salacious to demand some attention at the hands of the daily press. Marked copies of this number of the JOURNAL were therefore sent to all the San Francisco papers. One paper—the *Call*—devoted some space to the matter; one weekly—the *Star*—also referred to it. Immediately large advertisements of the "Viavi treatment," most carefully worded, appeared in all the daily papers. Not only was there a wonderful—almost an acute—silence, but the *Call* and *Town Talk* later published very nice little write-ups about the Laws and the "Viavi." Of course we do not mean to insinuate that the silence of the papers was bought with a little advertising; the very idea is repulsive to one who has an overwhelming respect for our glorious free and independent press! But the coincidence was certainly peculiar, particularly as the Viavi Company has not advertised in the press for many, many years. 'Tis a great world, and many strange and curious things do happen.

For years it has been a fact well recognized by physiologists and clinicians alike, that pepsin and pancreatin can not exist together in the same mixture. If the solution is neutral or alkaline, the pancreatin will slowly destroy the pepsin; if acid, the pepsin will destroy the pancreatin. Various authors have repeatedly given this information, and not infrequently in the form of a warning against the use of such compounds with the hope that any result will be obtained. Potter says: "It (pancreatin) is digested by pepsin, and hence probably never passes into the duodenum in its own character." Medical students are, presumably, taught this physiologic fact when in school; yet, when they graduate they seem to forget it. The Council on Pharmacy and Chemistry has investigated a number of preparations alleged to contain these two ferments, and has published a statement on the subject, in the *Journal A. M. A.*, with a list of the manufacturing houses and the preparations of this sort which they put out. It is a most astonishing arraignment. Certainly these preparations would not be put out by the manufacturers unless physicians demanded them. Yet what sort of physicians must they be who ignore the fundamental principles of the physiology of digestion, believe the statements in the advertisements of manufacturers, and place any faith in these impossible compounds? And what state of mind must be that of the manufacturer who, knowingly—and they all must know it—puts out these preparations and makes these impossible claims in his advertising? We have reached

a bewildering stage in the game of proprietary investigation! Who is to blame? Is the ignorance of the physician, and his trust in the untrue statements of the manufacturer, less or more culpable than the greed of the manufacturer who will make such statements and put out such preparations? If this is merely an indication of the uselessness of medical education, why attempt to regulate medical schools or enact laws requiring examination by licensing boards? What does it mean? Our teachers, our physiologists, our clinicians, our therapeutists all tell us that certain things are impossible; that pepsin and pancreatin can not exist in the same mixture. A few manufacturers tell us in their advertisements that they have a mixture containing pepsin and pancreatin which is, in each case of course, the "only real Simon pure best ever digestant." Enormous numbers of physicians must believe advertisements rather than the teachings of scientists, or the stuff would not be put out, nor by such firms as the following:

New York Pharmacal Association—Lactopeptin.
 Sharpe & Dohme—Pan-Peptic Elixir; Elixir Pepsin and Pancreatin; Elixir Pepsin, Bismuth and Pancreatin; Elixir Pepsin, Strychnin, Bismuth and Pancreatin.
 H. K. Mulford & Co.—Elixir Lactated Pepsin; Liquor Diastós.
 Parke, Davis & Co.—Elixir Pepsin, Bismuth and Pancreatin; Elixir Pepsin, Bismuth, Strychnin, and Pancreatin; Elixir Pepsin and Pancreatin; Elixir Pepsin and Pancreatin with Caffein; Malt Extract with Pepsin and Pancreatin; Elixir Lactated Pepsin.
 Frederick Stearns & Co.—Elixir Lactated Pepsin; Elixir Pepsin, Bismuth and Pancreatin; Elixir Pepsin and Pancreatin.
 Arthur Peters & Co.—Peter's Peptic Essence Comp.
 Wm. S. Merrell Chemical Co.—Elixir Atonic Dyspepsia, Phenolated; Malt Extract with Pepsin and Pancreatin.
 William R. Warner & Co.—Elixir Pepsin and Pancreatin; Liquid Pancreopepsin.
 Smith, Kilne and French—Elixir Pepsin, Bismuth and Pancreatin; Elixir Pepsin and Pancreatin.
 Columbus Pharmacal Co.—Peptic Digestant.
 Lilly & Co.—Elixir Pepsin and Pancreatin; Elixir Pepsin and Pancreatin Comp.; Elixir Pepsin, Pancreatin and Bismuth; Elixir Pepsin, Pancreatin, Bismuth and Strychnin; Elixir Pepsin and Pancreatin with Caffein.
 The Maltine Co.; Maltine with Pepsin and Pancreatin.

Reed & Carnrick—Peptenzyme Elixir.

This is not a collection of renegade nostrum houses, but in the list are to be found the names of some of the foremost pharmaceutical manufacturers in the United States. Many of them maintain large and expensive laboratories and biological departments and do a great deal of original research work. It is hardly comprehensible that they can be ignorant of the physiological incompatibility of the things which they say are to be found in the preparations listed. What is one to believe and where is one to place the blame for the existence of such a condition

of things? If it were not for the ignorance and gullibility of our own profession, there would be no call for such foolish mixtures. On the other hand, if the manufacturers did not advertise statements contrary to fact regarding them, physicians would not be fooled. It is a hard nut to crack, and we give it up!

Some of the proprietors of "patent" medicines are believed to have a keen sense of humor. The

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President of the Proprietary Association of America, Mr. F. J. Cheney, is apparently in this class. If memory serves,

Mr. Cheney is the author of the now celebrated "red ink clause," so splendidly shown up by *Collier's Weekly*, by means of which the "great American Fraud" had practically all the newspapers in the country successfully muzzled. Mr. Cheney, it is reported, addressed the Toledo Pharmaceutical Association, in January, on the subject of patent and proprietary medicines. From the extract at hand, it must have been a highly edifying address, though if Mr. Cheney continues to break forth in a similar strain he is in danger of being placed in the "Josh Billings" class, as a professional humorist. It must have been a strain upon Mr. Cheney's risibles to get off the following with a straight face:

"What is the secret of the success and popularity of patent and proprietary medicines? The first and greatest reason is their high standard of purity, uniformity of strength and medicinal qualities. Second—The acknowledged support of the most prominent doctors. Third—Their convenient form, excellent taste and nominal price. In looking over the leading medical journals published in this country, I notice many discussions carried on by eminent physicians regarding the sales and popularity of proprietary medicines, but not one of them, in my opinion, attributes the success of these remedies to the proper cause."

Mr. Cheney said that he was a pharmacist, forty years ago, and then is reported to have given birth to this chunk of startling information, "In those days the doctor was much interested in the natural crude drugs, and he would make daily calls to inspect them. I remember well the calls made by the most eminent physician in our county. For instance, if this doctor needed an infusion of Buchu, he would carefully look them over and select the choicest of leaves." The "most eminent physician in our county" must have been somewhat shy on patients, if he had the time to loiter at the drug store and pick out just the leaves he wanted made into an infusion of buchu!

When the office of a sure-thing operator in New York was raided, some few years ago, enormous quantities of letters from doctors, lawyers and parsons were found. The detective who had charge of the raid is said to have

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stated as his opinion that parsons and physicians were about the "easiest suckers" of all, to work. It would seem so. The *STATE JOURNAL* and the *Journal of the A. M. A.* have for some time been calling attention to specific instances of "working" the medical profession by nostrum men of sorts; unfortunately there are only too many medical (?) journals that seem to be ready, nay anxious, to help the nostrum men in the "working." There is a something, we know not what it is nor what wonderful things it is supposed to do, called "oxgulation"; it is supposed to be some sort of remedy and is advertised to a limited extent in medical journals. It was offered the *STATE JOURNAL* two or three times, but we declined the advertisement. The signs of the times would indicate that this is another preparation put before the physician in order that he may by prescribing it, create a demand which will lead the public to buy it over the counter—teach the public to self-prescribe another preparation. The usual course of such things is "work the medical profession" claiming to be an "ethical proprietary," and then go to the public with all sorts of medical endorsements and become a "patent medicine." *N. A. R. D. Notes*, the publication which represents the purely commercial side of pharmacy and urges druggists to "push" any old patent medicine, if the price is high enough, prints a portion of a letter from the "oxgulation" folk in which they say they protect the retail price of their stuff and *do not sell it to mail-order houses or department stores*—"and the retail price is plainly lithographed on the cans." How perfectly delightful!

The example set by two or three of our county societies should not be ignored by the others; all should make an effort to arrange meetings between the medical societies and the bar associations, ministerial associations and prominent citizens of all classes generally. Nor should such meetings ignore the commercial side of our profession. If the laity once comes to realize that to be an up-to-date physician, nowadays, is not an inexpensive matter, there will be a better appreciation of decent fees. A poorly paid doctor is generally not a good doctor, for he can not keep himself supplied with current literature nor provide the required armamentarium; and every patient is entitled to, and should receive, the services of a good average up-to-date physician. Lodge and similar contract practice business really is an injury to the subscriber thereto, for bargain-counter methods in professional work always, eventually, harm the subscriber more than any one else; he gets the services of a cheap man—exactly what he pays for! Furthermore, the very members of the lodge not infrequently look